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This newsletter is an activity of the 'Communities for Change' Project funded by the Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany, Islamabad. This is a 21-month project that started in May 2009, with the objective to empower the people of FATA to claim and defend their social, political and economic rights.

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Editorial

The FATA Reforms...one year on!

There are mixed feelings as we put together this issue of the newsletter. While Pakistan is going through the worst natural disaster in its history, the 63rd Independence Day of Pakistan will be celebrated this month, and the blessed month of Ramadan will also be upon us.

According to reports, over 20 million have been affected by the floods all over Pakistan. While relief efforts are on, the devastation is so huge that everyone involved is feeling overwhelmed. CAMP is also going to be involved in the relief activities and we appeal to donate generously and help people who have lost their loved ones, their homes and livelihoods. If you want to donate through CAMP, please email us at donations@camp.org.pk or call us at +92-51-2297647.

In this month's feature, we are sharing with you a report on the unfortunate blast that shook the Ekka Ghund bazaar in Mohmand

Agency, leaving many innocent civilians dead and many more injured. CAMP strongly condemns this act of cowardice and sympathises with all those who lost family and friends. In our interview section, you can read the views of Gen. Ali Muhammad Jan Aurakzai on his contributions to FATA and his vision for the future. 'Political freedom of FATA', is a well timed article as we wonder about the announcement made by the President of Pakistan on August 14 2009, regarding the FATA reform package. And finally, we share with you an update of our Project activities as our network of community based organizations starts to implement small advocacy based activities.

Please remember to think of your brothers and sisters in the flood affected areas. Happy Independence and Happy Ramadan!

Editorial Team

One year on, the people of FATA still await the implementation of the FATA Reforms package announced by President Mr. Asif Ali Zardari on 14th of August 2009. As we celebrate the 63rd Independent Day of Pakistan, we urge the Government of Pakistan to initiate the implementation of the FATA Reforms package on a top priority basis.

News from the Field

Promoting Peace and Good Governance at the Grassroot Level in FATA

Activities under Small Grants Scheme by Local CBOs and NGOs

The Small Grants Scheme under the Communities for Change Project entered the practical stage in June, 2010 when 64 CBOs/NGOs of Khyber and Mohmand Agencies signed contracts with CAMP. After receiving skills training in different thematic areas, the network of CBOs/NGOs of CFC were all set to come up with different ideas and proposals around peace & security, promoting democracy and civic education, raising voices for human rights and demanding reforms in the FCR and FATA status.

While it was planned that the activities be started simultaneously in all three agencies, the implementation of advocacy activities was delayed in Kurram Agency because of the security situation and inaccessibility to some of the areas. However, during July, CAMP received 25 proposals from organizations in Kurram on various advocacy related projects, which have been reviewed and will be approved shortly.

On the 2nd of July, CAMP signed agreements with 32 CBOs/NGOs of Mohmand Agency for the Small Grants Scheme. 32 organizations from Khyber had signed the agreements during the month of June and already began activities in July 2010. The CBOs/NGOs of both agencies received the first payments of their budgets. In Mohmand Agency the volatile situation after the Ekka Ghund bomb blast, which took well over 100 innocent lives, prevented any activities from taking place, since the individuals of the CBOs/NGOs, as well as their families were among victims and injured. This halted the implementation of activities in Mohmand Agency, yet they were able to purchase furniture and office equipment for their offices set-up.

Following are the few snap shots from

the field:

Promoting Peace & Security

Three seminars were arranged by the CBOs/NGOs of Khyber Agency for advocating Peace and Security in their region. In addition four *mushairas* were also held in this connection focusing on revival of culture and promotion of peace and tolerance. One press conference was organised in local press club while a cricket tournament was organised delivering messages of peace



and harmony. Another session with the local communities was held to discuss local issues, including peace and in this regard a Peace Committee was also formed by the six CBOs/NGOs with the aim to oversee Peace and Security in their respective areas.

Educating Masses on Democracy and Civic Education

Two CBOs took up activities on raising civic awareness and promoting good governance. Various activities such as, a one-day workshop, separate sessions with teachers and students, local community and community elders, were also part of these projects. Several activities such as a seminar, a *mushaira*, a jirga and a walk were undertaken in addition to a volley ball tournament, for creating awareness of



the negative impact of aerial firing.

Advocating Reforms for FATA

One of the CBOs undertook initiative to advocate for reforms in the FCR and in the governance system of FATA. For this purpose, a cricket tournament and awareness walk was conducted by the concerned CBO at local level wherein local elders, youth, Mullahs, and other stakeholders took part.

Promoting Health and Hygiene and Awareness against Drugs

Four CBOs/NGOs took up the task of raising awareness for health and hygiene and against the use of drugs. For the purpose, the CBOs/NGOs conducted two quiz competitions and a session with the local community on health and hygiene. A *mushaira*,



session with drug dealers and with doctors was also conducted. There was also a speech by a religious cleric who explained the Islamic injunctions against it.

Assessment of Proposals by CBOs of Kurram

The CBOs/NGOs of Kurram Agency were briefed about the specifics of the project as well as instructed about the application process. The CBOs/NGOs were facilitated during the process of applications' submission. The proposals were also sent back for further improvement after being analyzed by CAMP Staff. For final assessments by the Grants Review Committee at CAMP, 25 proposals were received of the 31 CBOs/NGOs of Kurram Agency, while the others will be received and finalized soon.

MONITORING

The field staff of Khyber and Mohmand Agency undertook monitoring visits to the offices of the CBOs/NGOs to check the progress on Small Grants Scheme work. They also checked the receipts and bills of the equipment bought and other related documentation. The field staff of Khyber Agency made 29 visits to 15 CBOs/NGOs in their agency. The activities of the CBOs/NGOs of Mohmand Agency are planned for the

first and second week of August.

Project Coordinator (CFC) and Program Manager (CAMP) visited the field offices of Mohmand and Khyber Agency. The team analyzed the documentation of the office during their visit.

Tragedy in Mohmand Agency Halted Implementation of Peace Activities

In the aftermath of the Ekka Ghund

bomb blast and other terrorist activities in Mohmand Agency, the CAMP Staff conducted a meeting with the Mohmand Advisory Council which is a network of 32 local village based CBOs of Mohmand Agency. The aim was to devise a way forward for conducting activities during this period of insecurity. These areas being closer to the settled areas, however, the members were hopeful that peace will soon be restored.



Political Freedom in FATA

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Since Independence, successive Pakistani Governments have failed to extend the Political Parties Act to the tribal areas on dubious pretexts. It is often speculated that this has been intentional on the part of the ruling elite who want the area to remain backward to serve their own vested interests. Despite this injustice by both democratically elected and martial law governments of our country, democracy has remained the corner stone of decision making in tribal society for decades.

History is witness to the fact that tribal jirga has always made its decision on majority basis and that is the sole reason for the acclaim and acceptability of the historic institution of jirga among the tribesmen, and that is why it is also considered as a successful tool for speedy and cheap justice.

A ban on political activities was not specifically mentioned in the FCR, but capitalizing on their unbridled coercive powers, the political administration in tribal areas suppressed voices for political freedom with use of brutal force. Despite these coercive methods adopted by the government functionaries, tribesmen continued with their demand for political freedom and basic constitutional rights enshrined in the country's 1973 Constitution.

Over time, a number of political organizations and movements were formed; Tehrik-i-Ittehad Qabail (TIQ)

the most vocal among them, in order to secure political freedom for FATA and apprise the outside world about the negative impact of FCR on tribal society. TIQ was formed in early seventies and had its roots in almost the entire tribal belt. The growing popularity of TIQ was a huge embarrassment for the forces that were averse to the provision of political freedom to tribal people. And the same forces then worked days and nights to create dents in the ranks of TIQ, thus weakening this indigenous tribal political force.

Taking inspiration from the hard work done by TIQ, the country's main stream political parties also extended their influence to FATA and were able to attract some tribesmen to their ranks, though their existence was challenged by the all powerful tribal elders and officially nominated Maliks. The initiative was however, seized by religious political parties who relied heavily on the religious sentiments of tribal people. The rest of the political parties on the other hand did little to challenge or counter the influence of religious parties thus leaving a huge gap for them exploit the situation in their favor especially during the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan.

But rapidly changing situation in Afghanistan (from late 70's to mid 80's) also proved to be a blessing in disguise for those tribal people who had personal political aspirations and who

were also clamoring for political freedom for the people of FATA. The unfolding of events in Afghanistan provided an impetus to the struggle for the achievement of political rights in tribal areas. At the same time the prevailing situation also shook the conscience of major political parties to raise their voice for the extension of Political Parties Act to tribal areas, both in order to counter the religious extremism and to expand their own vote bank.

It was in keeping with this growing demand that the government allowed the tribesmen to vote under the adult franchise basis in the 1997 General Elections. The winning of voting rights on adult franchise basis was a huge victory for democratic forces in tribal areas despite stiff resistance from tribal Maliks and their mentor, the political administration. Before the 1997 General Elections, only the hand-picked Maliks were entitled to vote and contest elections.

The battle for winning political rights did not end with the securing of voting right but the demand for full political freedom gained momentum with every passing day. "The salvation of tribal people lies only in complete political freedom", observed Abdur Rahim Afridi, a political activist from Khyber Agency. He along with thousands of other politically motivated tribesmen believes that the century-old sense of

deprivation could end only with the extension of Political Parties Act into tribal areas. He is of the firm belief that political freedom would ensure all basic human, constitutional and legal rights to the tribal people. "As equal citizens of Pakistan, we are entitled to all these rights but lack of political awareness is an impediment in achieving these rights", he said.

Another political worker Bazaar Gul Afridi is of the opinion that rapid development of tribal areas lies in the provision of political rights to the inhabitants of this unfortunate land. He alleged that most of the development funds are embezzled by the corrupt

officials of political administration as we do not have elected local bodies' councils.

The tribal people now see glimmer of hope as the sitting President of Pakistan Asif Ali Zardari had on August 14, 2009 announced that alongside amending the century-old Frontier Crimes Regulations in accordance with the aspiration of tribal people, the Political Parties Act would also be extended to FATA at an opportune time.

With exactly a year gone by, the tribesmen are still waiting for that opportune time, which many believe, would change their destinies and that too for good.

Pashto Literature (Adabi Pashto)

The language of flowing water
The language of depths
The language of ravines
The language of curves of Bara
The language of might tides of Indus
You have covered all plains and hills
It's only you everywhere
My beloved Pashto
I love you so much

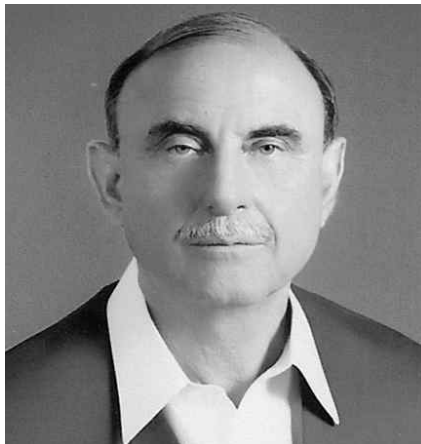
Poem: Murad Shinwari
Translation: Haroon Shinwari

An interview with Gen (Retd) Ali Muhammad Jan Aurakzai

Q. What is your vision for FATA?

A. When I was posted in FATA as a Corps Commander, I had the opportunity to visit the whole of FATA. This was the time when I learned that this is the most oppressed, underdeveloped and ignored area of the country. The people of FATA are now hopeless and unsure of their future; they are disillusioned and filled with negative sentiments. All the successive governments have used them for their own purposes and this has been the case in pre- and post-independence eras. The people suffered in the 1947 Kashmir war, and were then forgotten. They were bombed during the Soviet Afghan War and forgotten again.

That is precisely why I wanted development for them. I opened areas in FATA that had remained inaccessible in known history. We made roads to Khyber, Kurram, Orakzai, Mohmand and North and South Waziristan. These roads opened them to the outside world and development. I used army engineers for these tasks and all in all we built 750 kilometres of roads during my tenure there. The Narcotics Affairs Section of USA that was working there also financed the projects amounting to 24 million dollars. We made a master plan of construction and development for the area including schools and colleges etc.



Over and above all this, I endeavoured to spread awareness among the people of FATA. I addressed large Jirgas (gathering of people) in different parts of FATA and explained to them the importance of education. I told them to leave guns and take up pens; gradually they started to think and realize the root cause of the problem i.e. lack of education.

During a jirga in Shawal North Waziristan, I was struck by the beauty of that area. What pleasantly surprised me during that visit was the fact that the people themselves demanded that tourism should be facilitated in their area. They were of course apprehensive of the sacrilege of their cultures and traditions but I assured them that being a tribal myself, I will be careful of these things. I want to emphasize that they

were ready to change and they had embraced progress and development. I asked them to come forward, to educate, to start trade, to enrol in army; it was a quiet revolution.

My vision was to create economic stakes for the people of FATA so that they would crave development themselves and would aspire to be a part of the national mainstream in all spheres. Alas that was not to be in FATA and the rest of the country is bleeding today and we don't know what to do with it.

Q. Do you see your vision being realized in FATA?

A. When I retired from the army, there was peace in the region. From Bajaur to Khyber, through the length of FATA, a soldier could travel alone in his jeep or on foot without any fear. We launched dozens of military operations and apprehended hundreds of foreign militants, since we were under tremendous pressure from our allies across the border to conduct the operations on the pattern that was being followed in Afghanistan. But we had laid down our own rules and conditions and did not use air force, artillery or heavy weapons. We told our allies that they would leave Afghanistan one day but the tribesmen were our people and this was our land. We were the ones who would have to live with

the consequences. I also said that these people will turn against the government and turn violent which will spread to other parts of the country; the advice was not followed.

Q. What were your prime achievements as Governor of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (former NWFP)?

A. One of my primary concerns was the maintenance of law and order. I took over as Governor, when North Waziristan was on fire and Bajaur was on the boil. There was no development work in most of FATA. I started with negotiations for establishing peace. I was able to conclude a peace agreement in North Waziristan.

After that my priority was development, on modern and scientific terms. I chalked out a FATA Sustainable Development Plan for the next five years. I employed nine consultants from international agencies like IUCN, as well as from international community like Germany, Japan and New Zealand. It took six months to complete the plan. Total financial outlay of the plan was 2.2 billion dollars, 50% of which was pledged by President Bush (\$750 million) and a few other countries, while 50% was to be financed through announced budget allocation.

FATA Development Authority (FDA) and FATA Secretariat were restructured. Earlier there used to be only one secretary to governor and one for law and order. All development activities were planned by him and he managed Governor Secretariat as well. There was no FDA then. We had the whole structure made. And this was all done to streamline the efforts we were making for FATA, for peace and development. So they have the potential but they need an administrator.

I made this Sustainable Development Programme keeping in view the extreme backwardness in FATA. We arranged workshops in all agencies of FATA and we called everyone, youth, elders and all. Then we had one where I called Tribal Elders and prominent people and we asked their priorities. Then we had another one in Peshawar where there were diplomats, tribal people and parliamentarians. The final

one was held at the Convention Centre, Islamabad. The purpose of that was to have a comprehensive opinion of other stakeholders in this regard, and so I invited all the diplomats and potential donors that would have wanted to finance the plan. I gave a presentation myself in order to put across the importance of the plan for them. Finances were pledged by different countries including Italy, Norway, Japan, Germany, Canada and Netherlands. In addition to the roads, bridges and schools, we had also chalked out areas for Reconstruction Opportunity Zones (ROZs). And since I realised that at that time we could not have started ROZs inside FATA, we had earmarked areas adjacent to FATA for this purpose.

Other than that we carried out a Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey. Earlier there was no master plan and the approach was to give 1 school to a Malik without much thought. This survey helped us a great deal in making the development strategy on realistic and scientific lines. To the people in Islamabad I explained that we cannot have peace and development in FATA unless there is peace in Afghanistan.

For that I went with President Musharraf to meet President Bush. I plainly told him that they had not been able to achieve their target in Afghanistan and that the only way they could achieve a peaceful and gradual withdrawal was through a peace jirga with the Taliban, since they were in reality spearheading the war and fighting for the liberation of their land from occupational forces. He understood my point of view but later in his meeting with President Karzai the very basic structure of the jirga that I had suggested was changed and instead announcement was made from White House that a jirga of Afghan and Pakistani delegates would be helpful to find a solution to the problem in the region. That jirga was held but without any conclusive outcome except that both countries blamed each other for their woes and problems.

Q. With the current scenario, what do you see in the next five years?

A. I believe that we should strengthen democracy and our institutions. There

should not be a military take over. If the situation is not good today it is not entirely the fault of this government. Only a political process would eventually produce positive results. I only wish that the opposition plays a more effective role. Our media is playing a positive role and judiciary is becoming strong and independent. So if the process is allowed to proceed, it will get better.

Q. What do you want for FATA in future? And do you think the recently launched political party the Muttahidda Qabail Party will bring a change?

A. FATA does not have a voice and some of its parliamentarians are not even able to visit their areas because of insecurity. They cannot even legislate for their areas. It is necessary that the people of FATA have a voice. There are around 10 lac IDPs from FATA that are completely ignored; from Bajaur, North and South Waziristan, Orakzai, Khyber and Mohmand but no one is bothered about them. In contrast see the government's overwhelming response to the disaster in Hunza's Ataabad Lake. So I think a FATA related political party is a necessity and I think any such effort should be strengthened. The conditions of FATA would change with the passage of time and an action is necessary at this point since we cannot keep waiting for the time to be precisely right. The Political Parties Act should be implemented immediately so that the parties start their work there. Also, the area should have an indigenous party that works specifically for that area so the people have a forum to bring forward their problems and also give their own vision.

Q. What is your opinion of the FATA reform package and do you think it will make any significant difference?

A. These reforms have the approval of the people. FCR amendment is welcome. People will get justice. They do not have rights and are not like citizens of Pakistan and they have no privileges. This will at least give people their basic rights. So this was a good decision by the government. The people of the area are open to change but the process should be evolutionary and not revolutionary.

Mohmand Agency blast

On Friday, 9th July 2010, at 9:15 am, a strong blast rocked the Ekka Ghund bazaar in Mohmand Agency. In the ongoing wave of militancy this has been the most destructive. While there were conflicting reports about the number of casualties given by the locals and by the government, the overall number was reported to be more than 200, including seven Khasadar Forces and several women and children.

In addition, 40 to 50 shops, 2 hotels, 6 houses and the sub divisional headquarters jail building were also destroyed. The demolished wall of the jail left a security breach and around 30 prisoners escaped. Coming after a period of relative calm, the blast shook the already wrought nerves of the people devastated by terror attacks.

According to media reports, the bomb blew off at the entrance of Assistant Political Agent Lower division and was said to be targeting the Aman Jirga (peace gathering). Several members attending the meeting were also among the dead. The incident also puts a question mark on the continuous claims of the Government to have tackled the terrorist organizations. The sense of security has been snatched away from the people of the area and has deeply affected the individuals and families residing there.

The blast also affected the CAMP's field office staff and their family members. Below, they share their sentiments about the loss that people in their communities have suffered on that unfortunate day:

Sadoor Khan S/o Abdul Mawas Khan

Sadoor Khan is a driver in CAMP's Field Office, Mohmand Agency. Working for the Communities for Change Project, Sadoor belongs to Tehsil Ekka Ghund, Village Aqrab Dag. According to Sadoor, "My younger brother Abdur Rahman was seriously

injured in this blast. He is a taxi driver and he lost his car in the blast, which was the only source of income for his family. On the other hand, my brother-in-law, Niak Muhammad S/o Ghairat Khan died in the blast and his dead body could not be found. He was working in a hotel for Rs. 5000 per month and was the only breadwinner of his family of five. His wife is disturbed from the incident and his children are worried about their financial arrangements. This was not a blast but an attack that was targeting civilians. It has disturbed our lives and has increased responsibilities on our shoulders. It is only the poor and the helpless that are affected by such activities and are also left without assistance by the government."

Fakhr-e-Alam Khan

Fakhr-e-Alam Khan is working as Senior Social Organizer with the Communities for Change Project in Mohmand Agency. During this blast Mr. Fakhr-e-Alam's cousin, Mr. Rahman Khan lost his wife and two children aged 4 and 2. Fakhr-e-Alam said his cousin is still in the hospital suffering from the injuries he suffered during the blast. When he learned of the tragedy his family has suffered, he went into shock and he is still in coma."

Jehanzeb Khan Mohmand

Working as Social Organizer in Communities for Change Project with CAMP, Jehanzeb Khan belongs to Tehsil Ekka Ghund. According to him, "The blast deeply disturbed our social life and left terror and grief in our hearts. Local community of my area no longer believes in government agencies and departments because they have failed to provide protection regarding their lives and wealth. I have lost my nephew Ubaid Khan, aged 5 years who was an only son. His mother is deeply depressed after her son's death and her husband is still in

hospital under treatment. Their home is completely destroyed. Al-Khidmat Foundation provided the tents and other necessary utensils for domestic use. In the same blast my second cousin, Jamdul Khan was seriously injured and his son and his wife were also injured. They lost one young son Qadar Khan aged 25. His home is also completely destroyed and he has lost everything he earned in his whole life."

Ijaz Ahmad S/o Aqil Khan

Mr. Ijaz Ahmad is working as Social Organizer with CAMP's School Rehabilitation Project in Mohmand Agency. He belongs to Village Hafiz Kor, Tehsil Ekka Ghund. During the blast Ijaz Khan's first cousin Abdul Qadar Khan lost his life and his father, Jamdul Khan was injured. Both father and son were working at a shop in the Market and running their own business. The store was the only source of the income for their family. The monthly income from the shop was 4000-5000 rupees. Abdul Qadar left his wife and one daughter alone in this world and his three sisters are badly injured and admitted in hospital with their father. Their home is completely destroyed and Al-Khidmat Foundation has provided tents etc. for their shelter and domestic use. According to Ijaz Ahmad, his relatives are in a rough spot now and they have no hope from government agencies and political administration. Ijaz said that according to some people it was a missile attack, but whatever it was it has caused great harm not only to his family but to the entire population of the area who will not be able to forget this incident. In this time of dire need CAMP stands united with the nation and condemns in the strongest terms, the recent attacks on the people of Mohmand Agency and elsewhere in Pakistan.